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Atari Online News, Etc.  
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~ Happy New Year To All! ~ People Are Talking! ~ OpenOffice Fixed!  
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"  
"\*\*\*\*\*"

It's been one helluva year! The world has been faced with all kinds of adversity this past year - a disastrous tsunami and hurricanes wiping out cities, continued terrorism across the globe, and Joe missed more than one column! But, here we are, still managing to move forward. Many of us are still using our Atari computers fairly regularly despite the fact that the world has passed us by technologically. Who knows what next year will bring, but I can tell you that most of us are hoping that it's a good one.

All of us here at A-ONE want to extend our thanks for your continued support over the past year. We're about to embark on our eighth year - who knew we'd still be around today?!

Please celebrate New Year's Eve responsibly. The beginning of a new year is always worth celebrating, but we want you all around for a long time to come. Eat, drink, and be merry - but be safe.

Until next time...

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ARAnyM

Merry Christmas to you all,

There's two updates related to ARAnyM :)

<<http://eureka.atari.org/MacAranym.zip>> is a binary snapshot 0.9.2pre1 of ARAnyM for MacOSX. It was built with Xcode 1.5 under OSX.3.9. This package contains a boot disk image that is suitable for latest improvements of ARAnyM, similar to AFROS (ATARI Free OS). Ready to use.

<<http://eureka.atari.org/xa-my-aes.zip>> is a boot disk image that is suitable for ARAnyM 0.9.0 (all host platforms). It may be better to use a stable version (0.9.0) specially for devel

purposes. This disk image was updated with a December 23th snapshot of freeMiNT, and follows all other developments such as zView beta 7 etc.

It's up to you !

See you soon for updated news of the ATARI front ...

-- Francois LE COAT  
Author of Eureka 2.12 (2D Graph Describer, 3D Modeller)  
<http://eureka.atari.orgmailto:lec...@atari.org>

GIM Version 0.4 Released!

Hello all,

A Christmas release of GEM Instant Messenger has arrived. GEM Instant Messenger is an AOL instant messenger compatible IM client for Atari systems running MiNT. This version has fixes of iconification, font selection issues fixed, it's built with Windom 2.0, buddylist size/position is saved in the configuration file, debug text has been isolated and removed, bug causing buddylist to redraw over everything fixed, and restructuring and beautification of all dialogs.

Now I'll be working on the Sparemint Update Manager to get a usable release now that I finally got my new server up and running. It shouldn't be long at all. Also the site is almost ready to go again :)

Once that is done, I plan to rebuild gim mostly from scratch using the current version of libfaim. In this version, now that I have much more GEM experience, I will make sure everything is *\*very\** pluggable so that protocol plugins can be used, and the new version of libfaim has many nifty features like server side buddylists and more!

Have a merry XMAS and happy to holidays to people who swing the other ways :)

Thanks,  
Mark  
<http://www.atari-source.org>

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
[joe@atarinews.org](mailto:joe@atarinews.org)

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone, and we've survived half of "The Holidays". The other half, of course, is New Year's Eve. Of the two, I've always found New Year's to be the more

dangerous of the two.

Whereas Christmas is pretty much a family holiday, New Year's Eve tends to be a party night, with lots of merriment and alcohol. I'm not against merriment... heck, I'm not even against alcohol. But it's easier to turn merriment off when you try to drive. When was the last time you heard of someone getting pulled over for driving while happy? <grin>

As you might have heard me say before, New Year's Eve has always been a time for quiet introspection, not drinking and partying. Now, I'm not saying that's the only way to go, and I realize that the coming of the new year can and should be a time for happiness, it's just that that's not my way.

The point that I started out trying to make is simply this: If you go out on the town, or even to a house party, on New Year's Eve, please be careful. Not drinking if you're going to drive is only part of the deal. The other part is watching out for the other guy who might not be as socially conscious as you.

Look, we need every Atari user we can get these days. Do us a favor and take care of yourself.

Okay, enough of that. Let's get to the news, hints, tips and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
=====

'Gnorik' asks for information about RF modulators in STs:

"I have Atari 1040 Ste. I have read on the net, that any Atari ST has an RF antenna cable with which one can connect the ST to any tv. It seems that I can't find such an interface on my Atari ST, is this possible?

Or maybe the RF antenna cable should be connected to the same place, where Atari monitor connects?

Where is the RF modulator located Inside the Atari case, or it is mounted to the cable?

I am asking because I have no RF antenna cable for the Atari, I bought it one year ago with only a b/w monitor.

And another question about the monitor. I can see the TOS screen not full screen, but very small, a rather big part of the screen is taken up with a border, and TOS screen is only 1/3 of my monitor screen. I can't find any switcher to tune the monitor.

On the back side there are only three wheels for sound, brightness and contrast, and some switcher above them. If I turn the switcher up, I can see nothing if I turn it down, I see Atari TOS screen."

David Wade tells Gnorik:

"Its the single "phono" socket on the back. (assuming its an STE. or STFM, plain STF does not have modulator.) If its an STE there should be

three PHONO sockets on the back. Two are the stereo sound out and the third is the TV out. However its really only good for games.

BTW its the GEM desktop that you should see, not the TOS screen. Try setting the thing to "Medium Resolution". Its some where on the last menu."

Gnorik replies:

"Thank you very much for you answer.

But I really have Atari 1040 STe, its with AZERTY keyboard and french GEM.

But on the back there are only...

left to right:

modem port,

printer port,

hard disk port,

floppy disk interface,

then monitor interface, and then two audio jacks with letters "R" and

"L", and there are power switcher above.

Then there are power socket and reset button.

Also I have two midi sockets on the left side of Atari, one unknown interface, two joystick ports, b and a... I also have another two joystick ports , but can' find "phono" :)

I can take a picture and post it... Is it possible that french Atari STe's have no rf port?"

David tells gnorik:

"English ones are like this:-

<http://www.myoldcomputers.com/museum/comp/1040st.htm>

which is an STE as it has the extra joystick ports and the stereo phonos... You can see the TV Out between the Floppy and Monitor ports.

Its possible as French TV has some "odd" standards. Indeed when I looked I found this:-

<http://mpc.fab.free.fr/atari/atari16-32/pstf.htm>

Which shows a French STE with no RF output port, so perhaps the french STE did not have this port."

Peter West adds his own thoughts:

"[It's] Very possible [that French STe's don't have RF modulators], as French TVs use SECAM, not PAL, and perhaps Atari wouldn't find it worth while to produce a modulator for this restricted market..."

Edward Baiz adds this:

"The monitor has this border normally. YOu can make it smaller and

increase your viewing size by going in and doing some electrical adjustments. There is an article about this on the Net. I would just buy the various SVGA adapters that exist for the ST. This will allow you to hook up a PC-type VGA monitor, but will only give you mono. The screen size is MUCH larger. That is what I did and it works fine."

'gnorik' now asks about floppy activity during boot-up:

"When I am turning Atari on floppy drive is making some noise during a minute, and only after that TOS starts.

Is it proper for Atari St? The floppy drive is empty during start, but Atari makes some noise with it..."

'Chris' tells gnorik:

"TOS checks for boot drives and such for about 45seconds on bootup, after that time it gives up and you are then at the GEM desktop. If you put a blank disk in the drive then the boot sector of the floppy is read and TOS has "something" actually read, if there is nothing on the floppy then it boots right to GEM."

Edward Baiz tells Chris:

"That is one thing I have always liked about the ST. You do not have to worry about it or remember to hold down certain buttons to get the disk to boot. I wish my Hades was like that."

Francois Le Coat asks about MOD players under ARAnyM:

"I just downloaded two ModPlayers :

GemPLAY 0.97 [25.12.05 23:58]

Link: [gemplay097.lzh](#) Yescrew

mxPlay 1.00 - best module player for your Atari Falcon [24.12.05 23:58]

Link: [mxplay.sourceforge.net](#) [mxplay.atari.sk](#) [mxplay.lzh](#)

from <http://atari.sk/>

and I tested these with ARAnyM. The problem is that these players are performing a detection of the Falcon hardware.

But do you know that GSXB is implemented, and that the DMA sound system and DMA system calls are present, though there's no Falcon hardware.

Instead of detecting the Falcon hardware, you should better detect GSXB, and use DMA calls as usual. That's so simple !

GSXB is at : <http://assemsoft.atari.org/gsxb/>

I'm telling that about ARAnyM, but it is the same problem on my Hades 60."

'Janez' tells Francois:

"... Unless you have DSP working in Hades (MOD, ACE, GT2, AoN all use DSP replayers in GemPLAY, to minimise CPU usage) GSXB will not help u much. Reason for DSP is clear: no way to replay ACE, MP2/3, GT2, AON on less as 060 CPU and even on 060 u may have probs, not to mention that leftover CPU power will be weak. For example: MP3 takes let say 80% CPU power on 060, so its not exactly usable as background player... Falcamp use maybe 5%, Aniplayer with DSP 10% or so...

Personally I prefer using fast DSP replayers, so owners of "plain", "slow" Falcons can enjoy music and still have most of the CPU free for other tasks. Falcon 030 owners must NOT be bannes, just we have faster machines, esp since 030 Falcons are capable to replay all those formats... I also made separate players in ACC versions, so TOS users may enjoy music while doing other stuff."

Rory McMahon asks for opinions on what to do with his floppy disk collection:

"I have amassed an unwieldly amount of 3.5" 720k non-original game,menu and game demo disks. I have tested quite a few and most work fairly well. Some need a 50/60hz program, but most boot to the game start.

My dilemma, how can I get rid of these, and make a few bucks, make a few people happy. Should I format them and sell them as blanks or leave em as is? I would sell them in lots of 50 or 100, couple extra for possible bad disks? \$4 + cost of shipping? Dunno.

Or should I just put them in the dumpster?  
I couldn't possibly make a list of all the games. There are just too many and I'm really short on time anyway. Any ideas?"

Charles Copp jumps in and offers:

"I have a second plan for these disks ...what do you say to this...

He holds a contest and all the participants enter their addresses within a month, who is the furthest away from rory pays rory for the shipping and wins the disks.. great ideal huh?"

Neil Chester asks for help with Falcon mode on his CT60:

"Thought I'd use the Xmas holidays to get the CT60 Falcon working, after changing the HD to a 3.5 Maxtor 40Gb one night very successfully I thought that the flaky days of programs not running/disappearing were over! I hope they are not back again....

I am currently setting up the computer in Falcon mode (eg CT60 mode switched Off). I backed up my files from my CT2b's boot drive so that I could going faster than installing each application. This also means I have an adjusted MAGIC.RAM file for CT60 mode. TOS mode seems to be working correctly so I tried a Magic boot, second time it got through to the jinnee desktop OK. I tried to adjust the Video mode with VIDEOMOD.ACC (as supplied with Centscreen 3, this displayed the usual settings box but then as soon as I selected anything the box disappeared

and also disappeared from the ACC menu at the top of the screen! Loading it in by double clicking on the ACC file didn't resolve the fact that it had stopped working.

I remember I had this problem before with the old 2.5" drive installed except that Magic packed up and refused to work after some days. Even re-installing failed to get it working.

Is it a hardware or a software problem?

The micro ATX PSU is sat right above the CT60 board, I wondered if there was interference or heat problems.

Any suggestions would be helpful."

Djuro Pucaric offers this to Neil:

"Maybe [it's] some videomod.acc incompatibility with ct60?  
Try toggling fast ram flag bits as usual."

Well folks, that's it for this time around. Please remember to be responsible over the holiday weekend. Please don't drink and drive. Remember: The life you save may be MINE! <G>

Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - PSP Graffiti Ads Spark Controversy!  
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!  
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## PlayStation Graffiti Ads Spark Controversy

Sony Corp. scouted out an unusual place to advertise its PlayStation Portable before the holidays: the side of an abandoned building in a gritty North Philadelphia neighborhood.



The black-on-white graffiti shows wide-eyed cartoon characters riding the PlayStation like a skateboard, licking it like a lollipop or cranking it like a Jack-in-the-Box.

But there's no mention of the Sony or PlayStation brands nor any hint the wordless display is an ad.

The stealth marketing campaign has popped up in San Francisco, New York and other large U.S. cities.

"It's all about hip-hop, urban and all that. They're just trying to get into the teenagers' minds," said Eddie Torres, 29, who works at a nearby furniture shop. "I think it's sharp."

Anti-blight advocates think otherwise.

"They're breaking the law," said Mary Tracy, who runs the Society Created to Reduce Urban Blight, a watchdog group that fights illegal or ill-advised billboards in Philadelphia.

Tracy said Sony ignored the zoning process that regulates outdoor commercial advertising in the city.

Philadelphia Managing Director Pedro Ramos on Wednesday faxed a cease-and-desist letter to Sony Computer Entertainment's U.S. division in San Mateo, Calif. He could seek modest fines allowed by city code or sue to recover any profit the ads produced.

"My fines aren't going to scare Sony," Ramos said. "What will worry them is what the parents and their users will think. This really flies in the face of everything we've been trying to do with our anti-blight initiative."

The Sony division did not immediately respond to the letter or to a telephone message left by The Associated Press. However, Sony spokeswoman Molly Smith told an Internet news site earlier this month that Sony was hiring artists in seven cities Atlanta, Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago were the others to spray paint the pre-drawn designs.

"With PSP being a portable product, our target is what we consider to be urban nomads," Smith told Wired News.

In San Francisco, the ads were defaced soon after they appeared as word spread that Sony was behind them. "Get out of my city!!!" and "Fony" were written on one.

"I thought it was sneaky. Not cool," said Zan Sterling, who works at a bar near one of the ads, which has since been painted over. "I hope that they paid for the cleanup and removal."

Critics and supporters agree the campaign is designed to crack through the clutter of marketing that pervades daily life. Others have criticized its visual appeal.

"They hired artists to just copy this same figure over and over, which isn't too creative," said 29-year-old Jake Dobkin, a New Yorker who writes for the blog Gothamist.com.

That matters little to North Philadelphia resident Leslie Griggs, 39, who said the Sony ad is an improvement over the handbills and scrawls it

replaced.

"I don't think that's graffiti," Griggs said as she paused beside the PlayStation ad. "That's art."

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A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

OpenOffice Updated To Fix Bugs in 2.0

Continuing its effort to become a serious alternative to Microsoft Office, OpenOffice.org released an updated version of its open-source office suite this week. OpenOffice.org 2.01 comes two months after the formal release of version 2.0. The update mainly cleans up several glitches seen in the earlier release.

The free, downloadable suite includes standard office applications, such as a word processor, a database, a spreadsheet, and a presentation manager, all of which are available in versions of the suite that can run on Windows, Linux, and Solaris operating systems.

The updated version now includes support for several new languages, such as Hungarian, Turkish, Russian, Macedonian, Estonian, and Bulgarian.

More significant changes in this update reflect user feedback for a selection of features necessary in business environments. For example, administrators now have the ability to disable and hide certain settings, thereby limiting the functionality of applications to specific users. Admins also can construct special installation sets of OpenOffice.org to suit different user groups.

The developers working on the project also increased the suite's compatibility with Microsoft Office, adding support for the bullets and numbering features found in programs such as Microsoft Word.

This means that when an Office document is converted into OpenDocument Format (ODF) - the native file format of OpenOffice - users will not lose their bullets or numbered items. Instead, the items will be converted with the same images as in the original document.

Other enhancements include a mail-merge function and a keyboard shortcut with which users can save the position of their cursors. OpenOffice.org's Writer, in its default setting, will save the last cursor position when a document is closed. When users reopen the file, authors will find the cursor at the last position it was in before the document was closed.

"The changes are based on the primary objective of the OpenOffice team to provide a low-cost alternative to Microsoft Office," said Kyle McNabb, a Forrester Research analyst. "It is a credible alternative now to Microsoft Office. The incremental support they added has made it a credible

alternative for some businesses."

The changes in OpenOffice.org 2.01 are all well and good, said McNabb, but the update is missing the flair of new features.

In a Forrester Research report that examined the previous version of OpenOffice.org and Sun Microsystems's StarOffice 8, McNabb found that the open-source suite "mimics" Microsoft Office in many ways. McNabb also found that while it does offer "new, interesting file format and macro-conversion capabilities," the "lack of innovation and no real improvement over" Microsoft Office leave OpenOffice.org 2.0 as "little more than a cheap Office imitation and a step back for information workers."

OpenOffice.org is using what Microsoft Office does as the primary set of requirements instead of looking at the broader needs of the market, McNabb said. "It is an imitation at this point, and it will have a limited appeal in the market."

However, McNabb believes the missing innovation will not necessarily hurt OpenOffice.org because there are always companies looking for a less expensive alternative to Microsoft Office. But, said McNabb, it does put a constraint on the market appeal of the open-source suite.

#### Web Browser Opera Denies Buyout Rumors

Oslo-based browser maker Opera has issued denials of a buyout, in the midst of persistent rumors that Microsoft and Google have both targeted the company for acquisition.

Reports of pending acquisition have been cropping up on Web sites and blogs, fueling speculation that the company is not only up for purchase, but also has actually already been bought and is waiting for its buyer to announce the deal.

Analysts have noted that such an acquisition would be a smart move for Microsoft, which would be able to incorporate Opera's unique technology into the next iteration of Internet Explorer.

Officials at Opera have denied that the company has been purchased, and have stated that they are not interested in Opera being acquired.

If Opera is being eyed for acquisition, it would likely be because the browser's mobile version, Opera Mini, has become so popular with phone makers.

Opera is the leading browser for telemobile devices, the company claims, and has partnerships with Nokia, Motorola, and a number of Japanese and Chinese phone and device manufacturers.

Because Opera is a "small browser," meaning it is straightforward in terms of function and does not take much memory, it is well suited for devices. Browsers like Internet Explorer, by contrast, can be too graphics-heavy for PDA users, which limits the browser's use on mobile devices.

The Opera Mini was released for broad public preview just days before Christmas, and is scheduled to debut in January. So far, it has only been available to Scandinavian and German users.

Opera currently maintains only a very small slice of the browser market, but a shift in September to an ads-free, non-fee model helped to boost its popularity, according to Tor Odland, Opera spokesperson.

"Firefox has shown how an alternative browser can succeed and thrive," he said. "We think the market is ready for more competition to Internet Explorer."

The company is fiercely independent, he noted, and he characterized any buyout rumors as industry gossip.

"We have many plans for the future in terms of what we'd like to do with the browser, and directions for development," he said. "We look forward to carrying out those plans."

#### Hacker Pleads Guilty to Computer Attack on eBay

An Oregon man pleaded guilty to using a "worm" program to take control of 20,000 computers via the Internet and launch an attack on auction website eBay in 2003, US prosecutors said.

Anthony Clark, 21, faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of at least 250,000 dollars, according to Luke Macaulay of the US Attorney's Office.

Clark and accomplices unleashed a "worm" program that burrowed into computers with Microsoft Windows operating systems and turned the machines into obedient "bots", Macaulay said.

When Clark gave the commands, the bots launched online attacks on eBay and other websites, according to prosecutors.

The drone computers jammed the websites with requests, overloading them in what is called a denial-of-service attack, because it results in legitimate users being shut out, according to prosecutors.

Clark was arrested as part of a "Botnet" investigation by the US Secret Service and the US Attorney's Office, Macaulay said.

Clark pleaded guilty in a federal court in the Silicon Valley city of San Jose on Tuesday, prosecutors said.

#### AOL Releases Top 10 Spam List

In its annual analysis of mass e-mail attacks, AOL reports that spammers are using more "special order"-type subject lines to mislead people.

AOL's Top 10 Spam List this year shows that instead of generic pitches for products, specificity is now the favored approach by those attempting to trick people into opening otherwise unwanted e-mails.

"Spammers are getting more devious, hoping to cash in through identity theft and phishing attempts," said AOL spokesperson Nicholas Graham. "They

are distributing e-mails that attempt to get people to reveal sensitive information such as bank account and credit card numbers, or to hijack a user's PC."

There has been an increase in organized spam rings, said Graham. These syndicates target large e-mail systems and use bot networks to spread their brand of deception across the Internet.

Examples of spam on this year's list include "Your Mortgage Application is Ready," "Online Prescriptions Made Easy," and one from "Lisa" that claims to have "sent you to the wrong site." Unsuspecting folks are lured into providing personal information through such bogus sales offers, said Graham.

Other ruses on the list include pitches for products that claim to improve physical appearance and sexual prowess, and free offers for items like the iPod Nano and Xbox 360.

AOL's 2005 Top 10 global spam messages, by subject line:

1. Donald Trump Wants You - Please Respond
2. Double Standards New Product - Penis Patch
3. Body Wrap: Lose 6-20 inches in one hour
4. Get an Apple iPod Nano, PS3 or Xbox 360 for Free
5. It's Lisa, I must have sent you to the wrong site
6. Breaking Stock News\*\* Small Cap Issue Poised to Triple
7. Thank you for your business. Shipment notification
8. (IMPORTANT) Your Mortgage Application is Ready
9. Thank you: Your \$199 Rolex Special Included
10. Online Prescriptions Made Easy

AOL reported progress overall in stemming spam in 2005. The company said that spam reaching its customers has declined by more than 75 percent since its peak in late 2003, as measured by member complaints.

AOL claimed that this year, it blocked an average of 1.5 billion spam messages each day, or a total of 556 billion blocked messages for the year. Those messages accounted for 80 percent of all e-mail that reached AOL's gateway, the company said.

#### Landmark UK Spam Case Decided

A British man has won a landmark case in the UK against a company that was allegedly sending him unsolicited e-mail repeatedly.

Nigel Roberts sued Media Logistics UK, a marketing company, after receiving a number of e-mail advertisements about starting a fax broadcasting business and a contract car firm. The advertisers used Media Logistics to spread their messages to Internet users.

The case's outcome could prompt more individuals to go after companies that use e-mail for marketing messages without opt-in permission from users.

Media Logistics has to pay only a minor amount, since Roberts limited his monetary damages in order for the case to be heard in small claims court.

The choice of that court ensured that the case would go through the system

faster and not require extensive, costly legal assistance for Roberts.

Although Media Logistics does not have to pay a large amount in damages, the case is already being heralded as a win for everyone who has tired of spam, and is expected to inspire more litigation in the coming year.

The decision for Roberts comes three years after the European Union passed a directive on privacy and telecommunication that prohibited spam. The case is believed to be the first successful prosecution of its kind in Europe.

In the U.S., a number of high-profile cases have also worked to limit spam's reach. Microsoft in particular has been aggressive in taking spammers to court, with the cooperation of state authorities.

Last July, for example, Microsoft and Massachusetts shut down a major spam operation and targeted them for prosecution.

With actions like those, as well as more court cases globally, there is hope that spam can at least be reduced, according to Microsoft's Internet safety enforcement attorney Aaron Kornblum.

"The amount of spam coming from some individuals, or a spam ring, can be staggering," he said. "If these people in particular are sued, and their operations shut down, the effect would be considerable."

#### NSA Web Site Places 'Cookies' on Computers

The National Security Agency's Internet site has been placing files on visitors' computers that can track their Web surfing activity despite strict federal rules banning most of them.

These files, known as "cookies," disappeared after a privacy activist complained and The Associated Press made inquiries this week, and agency officials acknowledged Wednesday they had made a mistake. Nonetheless, the issue raises questions about privacy at a spy agency already on the defensive amid reports of a secretive eavesdropping program in the United States.

"Considering the surveillance power the NSA has, cookies are not exactly a major concern," said Ari Schwartz, associate director at the Center for Democracy and Technology, a privacy advocacy group in Washington, D.C. "But it does show a general lack of understanding about privacy rules when they are not even following the government's very basic rules for Web privacy."

Until Tuesday, the NSA site created two cookie files that do not expire until 2035 - likely beyond the life of any computer in use today.

Don Weber, an NSA spokesman, said in a statement Wednesday that the cookie use resulted from a recent software upgrade. Normally, the site uses temporary, permissible cookies that are automatically deleted when users close their Web browsers, he said, but the software in use shipped with persistent cookies already on.

"After being tipped to the issue, we immediately disabled the cookies," he said.

Cookies are widely used at commercial Web sites and can make Internet

browsing more convenient by letting sites remember user preferences. For instance, visitors would not have to repeatedly enter passwords at sites that require them.

But privacy advocates complain that cookies can also track Web surfing, even if no personal information is actually collected.

In a 2003 memo, the White House's Office of Management and Budget prohibits federal agencies from using persistent cookies - those that aren't automatically deleted right away - unless there is a "compelling need."

A senior official must sign off on any such use, and an agency that uses them must disclose and detail their use in its privacy policy.

Peter Swire, a Clinton administration official who had drafted an earlier version of the cookie guidelines, said clear notice is a must, and 'vague assertions of national security, such as exist in the NSA policy, are not sufficient."

Daniel Brandt, a privacy activist who discovered the NSA cookies, said mistakes happen, "but in any case, it's illegal. The (guideline) doesn't say anything about doing it accidentally."

The Bush administration has come under fire recently over reports it authorized NSA to secretly spy on e-mail and phone calls without court orders.

Since The New York Times disclosed the domestic spying program earlier this month, President Bush has stressed that his executive order allowing the eavesdropping was limited to people with known links to al-Qaida.

But on its Web site Friday, the Times reported that the NSA, with help from American telecommunications companies, obtained broader access to streams of domestic and international communications.

The NSA's cookie use is unrelated, and Weber said it was strictly to improve the surfing experience "and not to collect personal user data."

Richard M. Smith, a security consultant in Cambridge, Mass., questions whether persistent cookies would even be of much use to the NSA. They are great for news and other sites with repeat visitors, he said, but the NSA's site does not appear to have enough fresh content to warrant more than occasional visits.

The government first issued strict rules on cookies in 2000 after disclosures that the White House drug policy office had used the technology to track computer users viewing its online anti-drug advertising. Even a year later, a congressional study found 300 cookies still on the Web sites of 23 agencies.

In 2002, the CIA removed cookies it had inadvertently placed at one of its sites after Brandt called it to the agency's attention.

#### Head of Massachusetts I.T. Quits over OpenDocument Flap

Peter Quinn, head of Massachusetts' Information Technology division since 2002, has resigned his position, saying that his presence seems to be

hindering future I.T. initiatives.

Quinn and his department have been the focus of intense debate in the last few months, after deciding to move the state's government offices to OpenDocument Format (ODF) by 2007.

The transition was immediately challenged by Microsoft, and Gov. Mitt Romney stepped in to support Microsoft's attempts to develop a format that would fulfill the state's new mandates.

In an e-mail to his staff announcing his decision, Quinn noted that he has become a "lightning rod" with regard to I.T. decisions. "Even the smallest initiatives are being mitigated or stopped by some of the most unlikely and often uninformed parties," he wrote, according to news sources.

Many in the open-source community have expressed criticism over the way Quinn has been treated in recent months, especially by The Boston Globe.

The newspaper had called for an investigation of Quinn's travel expenses for technology conferences.

Quinn was exonerated of charges. But some people have speculated that the intense focus on Quinn's private and professional life could have been a factor in his resignation.

Also being debated in the wake of Quinn's departure is the role of Microsoft, which has sparked anger from open-source advocates who believe the company is heavily involved "behind the scenes" with Massachusetts government officials.

"Microsoft is in there, stirring up debate," said Pamela Jones, who runs watchdog site Groklaw. "The whole thing is more of a mess than it has to be."

A recent posting on Groklaw reflects the vitriol surrounding the issue: "No one human and decent will volunteer to work in the public sector if they are egregiously mistreated as their reward," an anonymous poster wrote. "I believe it's pointless to ask Microsoft to ponder its ways."

However, Quinn's departure does not represent an automatic victory for Microsoft. Romney spokesperson Eric Fehrstrom noted that the ODF initiative is still in place, and that records will begin to be stored in that format beginning in 2007, as planned.

### Study Shows Differences in Internet Use

Women are now as likely to use the Internet as men - about two-thirds of both genders - yet a new study shows that gaps remain in what each sex does online.

American men who go online are more likely than women to check the weather, the news, sports, political and financial information, the Pew Internet and American Life Project reported Wednesday. They are also more likely to use the Internet to download music and software and to take a class.

Online women, meanwhile, are bigger users of e-mail, and they are also more likely to go online for religious information and support for health or



personal problems.

"For men, it's just, 'Give me the facts," said Deborah Fallows, who wrote the report based on six years of Pew surveys. "For women, it's 'Let's talk about this. Are you worried about this problem?' It's keeping in touch and connecting with people in a richer way."

About two-thirds of the 6,403 adults surveyed by Pew during 2005 said they use the Internet. By gender, it was 68 percent of the male respondents, and 66 percent of the female participants - a statistically insignificant difference given the study's margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

In 2002, by contrast, the gap was slightly larger: 61 percent vs. 57 percent.

The surveys find that for many activities, such as getting travel information or looking up a phone number, men and women are equally likely to use the Internet.

Barry Wellman, a sociology professor at the University of Toronto, said he was struck by the similarities and the affirmation that the Internet is so integrated into the lives of both men and women that "they aren't even thinking they are going on the Internet anymore."

In the relatively small number of activities where differences were noticeable, they were often slight.

A survey from March, for instance, found that 54 percent of online men use the Internet for job-related research, compared with 48 percent of female Internet users. A September survey found 94 percent of online women sending e-mail, compared with 88 percent for men.

Women also were more likely to use e-mail to write friends and relatives about news, worries, advice and planning. They were also more likely to credit e-mail for improving relationships with friends, family and colleagues. Men, on the other hand, were more likely to participate in interest groups, such as fan clubs.

Men also were more likely to use the Internet for entertainment, such as downloading songs and video, listening to music at Web sites and remixing songs, images or text into new creations. Fallows attributes that to a greater comfort with technology, another of the surveys' findings.

Tracy Kennedy, a University of Toronto and Brock University lecturer who specializes in Internet use in the home, said that beyond gender, a person's offline life produces "different expectations, different routines and different needs" when he or she goes online.

For example, women are often the primary caretakers in households, she said, so, "yes, its very likely that she will be searching for health information for her kids and spouse (or) partner."

"We can certainly assert the gender differences argument, but I think there's much more to it than that," she said.

Microsoft has big plans for the trusty old C:\ prompt. For its upcoming Windows Vista operating system, the company is developing a new command-line interface, or shell - the text-based controls typically accessed by clicking Command Prompt (under Start Menu, Programs, Accessories) in Windows XP.

Code-named Monad, the new shell will enable a host of new programs known as scripts - something at which rival Unix operating systems have historically excelled. While these new commands and scripts will interest primarily administrators and power users, less-technical types may benefit from Monad scripts that could circulate on the Internet as Unix scripts do. For example, a Monad script might quickly reorganize files and directories based on their name or creation date - a task that can take a fair bit of manual labor in Windows Explorer.

A beta version of Monad for Windows XP is available as a free download. Registration is required, and you will also need to have .Net Framework 2.0 (available at the same page) installed.

#### Mom Fights Downloading Suit on Her Own

It was Easter Sunday, and Patricia Santangelo was in church with her kids when she says the music recording industry peeked into her computer and decided to take her to court.

Santangelo says she has never downloaded a single song on her computer, but the industry didn't see it that way. The woman from Wappingers Falls, about 80 miles north of New York City, is among the more than 16,000 people who have been sued for allegedly pirating music through file-sharing computer networks.

"I assumed that when I explained to them who I was and that I wasn't a computer downloader, it would just go away," she said in an interview. "I didn't really understand what it all meant. But they just kept insisting on a financial settlement."

The industry is demanding thousands of dollars to settle the case, but Santangelo, unlike the 3,700 defendants who have already settled, says she will stand on principle and fight the lawsuit.

"It's a moral issue," she said. "I can't sign something that says I agree to stop doing something I never did."

If the downloading was done on her computer, Santangelo thinks it may have been the work of a young friend of her children. Santangelo, 43, has been described by a federal judge as "an Internet-illiterate parent, who does not know Kazaa from kazoo, and who can barely retrieve her email." Kazaa is the peer-to-peer software program used to share files.

The drain on her resources to fight the case - she's divorced, has five children aged 7 to 19 and works as a property manager for a real estate company - forced her this month to drop her lawyer and begin representing herself.

"There was just no way I could continue on with a lawyer," she said. "I'm out \$24,000 and we haven't even gone to trial."

So on Thursday she was all alone at the defense table before federal Magistrate Judge Mark Fox in White Plains, looking a little nervous and replying simply, "Yes, sir" and "No, sir" to his questions about scheduling and exchange of evidence.

She did not look like someone who would have downloaded songs like Incubus' "Nowhere Fast," Godsmack's "Whatever" and Third Eye Blind's "Semi-Charmed Life," all of which were allegedly found on her computer.

Her former lawyer, Ray Beckerman, says Santangelo doesn't really need him.

"I'm sure she's going to win," he said. "I don't see how they could win. They have no case. They have no evidence she ever did anything. They don't know how the files appeared on her computer or who put them there."

Jenni Engebretsen, spokeswoman for the Recording Industry Association of America, the coalition of music companies that is pressing the lawsuits, would not comment specifically on Santangelo's case.

"Our goal with all these anti-piracy efforts is to protect the ability of the recording industry to invest in new bands and new music and give legal online services a chance to flourish," she said. "The illegal downloading of music is just as wrong as shoplifting from a local record store."

The David-and-Goliath nature of the case has attracted considerable attention in the Internet community. To those who defend the right to such "peer-to-peer" networks and criticize the RIAA's tactics, Santangelo is a hero.

Jon Newton, founder of an Internet site critical of the record companies, said by e-mail that with all the settlements, "The impression created is all these people have been successfully prosecuted for some as-yet undefined 'crime'. And yet not one of them has so far appeared in a court or before a judge. ... She's doing it alone. She's a courageous woman to be taking on the multibillion-dollar music industry."

Santangelo said her biggest issue is with Kazaa for allowing children to download music without parental permission. "I should have gotten at least an e-mail or something notifying me," she said. Telephone and e-mail messages seeking comment from the Australia-based owner of Kazaa, Sharman Networks Ltd., were not returned.

Because some cases are settled just before a trial and because it would be months before Santangelo's got that far, it's impossible to predict whether she might be the first to go to trial over music downloading.

But she vows that she's in the fight to stay.

"People say to me, 'You're crazy. Why don't you just settle?' I could probably get out of the whole thing if I paid maybe \$3,500 and signed their little document. But I won't do that."

Her travail started when the record companies used an investigator to go online and search for copyrighted recordings being made available by individuals. The investigator allegedly found hundreds on her computer on April 11, 2004. Months later, there was a phone call from the industry's "settlement center," demanding about \$7,500 "to keep me from being named in a lawsuit," Santangelo said.

Santangelo and Beckerman were confident they would win a motion to dismiss the case, but Judge Colleen McMahon ruled that the record companies had enough of a case to go forward. She said the issue was whether "an Internet-illiterate parent" could be held liable for her children's downloads.

Santangelo says she's learned a lot about computers in the past year.

"I read some of these blogs and they say, 'Why didn't this woman have a firewall?' she said. "Well, I have a firewall now. I have a ton of security now."

### Computer Visionary Diebold Dies at 79

John Diebold, a business visionary who preached computerization during the era of Elvis and Eisenhower as the future of worldwide industry, has died at the age of 79.

Diebold died of esophageal cancer Monday at his home in suburban Bedford Hills, said a nephew, John B. Diebold.

Although Diebold is now hailed as a prophet of the computerized future, his zeal for computers was not widely shared in the 1950s.

After graduating from the Harvard Business School in 1951, he was hired by a New York management consulting firm and was fired three times for insisting that clients consider computerizing.

"I was too early," he once said. "It was before the first computer was installed for business use."

Diebold laid out his vision of a computerized future with his 1952 book, "Automation," which presented the then-radical notion of using programmable devices in daily business.

The influential book was reissued on the 30th and 40th anniversaries of its publication.

His vision of the future was conceived while serving in the Merchant Marine during World War II. He watched the ship's anti-aircraft fire control system, with its crude self-correcting mechanisms, and envisioned adapting the technology for business use.

In 1954, Diebold launched his consulting firm John Diebold & Associates. Coincidentally, that was the same year General Electric unveiled the first full-scale computer system for a business.

Over the next half-century, his firm, which had no connection to electronic equipment company Diebold Inc., provided advice to AT&T, IBM, Boeing and Xerox, along with the cities of Chicago and New York and the countries of Venezuela and Jordan.

In 1961 his firm created an electronic network for the Bowery Savings Bank in New York that allowed immediate updates of all transactions, allowing customers to bank at any branch. His company also developed a network that changed the way hospitals keep records, medical records and statistics to be collected electronically.

Some of his ideas took time to reach fruition. In 1963, Diebold presented newspaper executives with a plan to use keyboards for entering stories that could be edited on computer consoles - a system that did not become standard until years later.

In addition to his nephew, Diebold is survived by his wife, Vanessa, along with a daughter and a son.

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